



Gitanyow *Fisheries* Authority



September 16, 2025

2025 Kitwanga River Salmon Enumeration Update #8

The Gitanyow Fisheries Authority (GFA) is pleased to announce that the Kitwanga River Adult Salmon Enumeration program is operational for 2025. Like in previous years, GFA will be providing regular updates on salmon escapement to the Kitwanga River (middle Skeena index) from July through to September. This year marks the 23rd consecutive year that GFA has implemented the program, which collects important in-season pacific salmon stock assessment and biological information. GFA would like to thank their 2025 funders and supporters, specifically the Gitanyow Chiefs (Gitanyow Huwilt Sustainability Fund), the Pacific Salmon Commission's Northern Endowment Fund and Fisheries and Oceans, Canada. GFA would also like to acknowledge and thank the Kitwanga Wilt Simadeeks for allowing GFA to continue to work within their traditional territory, as set out by our 2002 agreement. Updates will be distributed and posted on our website: www.gitanyowfisheries.com



Downstream view of KSEF on September 16, 2025

GFA staff installed the lower Kitwanga River Adult Salmon Enumeration Facility (KSEF) weir components from July 10-11, 2025 under slightly higher than normal water levels. The weir was fish tight by the afternoon of July 11. For 2025, we once again will be operating both a manual counting boxes and one digital video camera box with recording capabilities (DVR).

The water levels at the KSEF are currently at 0.60m (approximately 0.06m lower than the long-term average)¹ and water temperatures are higher than normal, currently fluctuating between 10-13°C. For more information on water levels and water temperature at the KSEF by day and compared to previous years, refer to the stage and temperature graphs below.

Like in previous years, the KsF (smolt fence) located at the outlet of Gitanyow Lake (~28km upstream from the KSEF) will be used again this year to count adult sockeye through an additional DVR camera system. The KsF DVR has been operational since July 2, 2025. Prior to July 2, the KsF was operated as a smolt fence and sockeye adults would have been prevented from swimming upstream undetected.

For 2025, the total sockeye return will be reported through both the KsF and the KSEF for comparison purposes and all other salmon counts will only be reported when they migrate past the KSEF.

Total salmon counts to the end of September 16, 2025:

KsF (~28km upstream from KSEF – in place before the KSEF was installed)

Sockeye= 1,152 (up to September 9)

KSEF

Sockeye= 1,232 Chinook= 904 Pink= 452,178 Chum= 288 Coho= 484

This year's **sockeye** escapement through the KSEF compares to a previous **maximum** observed to the day of 17,703 in 2010, which resulted in an overall escapement of 20,804 and the **minimum** observed to the day of 79 in 2019, which resulted in an overall escapement of 125. Based on average run timing for Kitwanga sockeye to the day (2003-2019) it is predicted that approximately **79%** of the run should have passed the KSEF. For more information on cumulative Kitwanga sockeye salmon abundance through the KSEF by day, refer to the sockeye salmon graph below.

To date we have counted **904 Chinook** (plus 93 jacks) through the KSEF. This year's Chinook escapement compares to a **maximum** observed to the day of 3,224 in 2007, which resulted in an overall escapement of 3,225 and the **minimum** observed to the day of 468 in 2024, which resulted in an overall escapement of 468. Based on average run timing for Kitwanga Chinook to the day (2003 - 2019 and 2021 - 2024) it is predicted that **all** of the run should have passed the KSEF. For more information on cumulative Kitwanga Chinook salmon abundance by date, refer to the Chinook graph below.

To date we have counted **452,178 pink** salmon through the KSEF. This year's odd-year pink compares to a **maximum** observed to the day of 646,035 in 2023, which resulted in an overall escapement of 653,985, and a **minimum** observed to the day of 52,608 in 2019, which resulted in an overall escapement of 52,644. Based on average run timing for pink salmon to the day (2003-2023) it is predicted that **99%** of the run should have passed the KSEF. For more information on cumulative Kitwanga odd-year pink salmon abundance by date, refer to the pink salmon graph below.

¹ Most of the large fluctuations in water levels in 2025 are due to the fence being cleared of high numbers of dead pinks.

To date we have counted **288 chum** salmon through the KSEF. This year's chum escapement compares to a **maximum** observed to the day of 1,758 in 2005, which resulted in an overall escapement of 1,862 and a **minimum** observed to the day of 61 in 2008, which resulted in an overall escapement of 150. Based on average run timing for chum salmon to the day (2003-2019, 2021, 2023, 2024) it is predicted that **81%** of the run should now have passed the KSEF. For more information on cumulative Kitwanga chum salmon abundance by date, refer to the chum salmon graph below.

To date we have counted **484 coho** salmon through the KSEF. This year's coho escapement compares to a **maximum** observed to the day of 5,226 in 2009, which resulted in an overall escapement of 12,080 and a **minimum** observed to the day of 10 in 2018, which resulted in an overall escapement of 551. Based on average run timing for coho salmon to the day (2003-2019) it is predicted that **29%** of the run should now have passed the KSEF. For more information on cumulative Kitwanga coho salmon abundance by date, refer to the coho salmon graph below.









